

**Earth Day 2008** This Earth Day, it is important to focus on what I believe to be one of the greatest challenges facing the world today, global warming. Just last week, President Bush finally joined the conversation, but his change of heart is too little, too late to restore his failed record on the environment and his proposal would do too little, too late to effectively combat global warming. The New Direction Congress has taken the first steps to reverse the failed energy policies of the past, committing instead to clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency that will reduce harmful emissions that contribute to global warming, bring skyrocketing energy costs back under control, create new, good-paying jobs, and put America back on the path toward economic growth and prosperity.

### **Reducing Global**

### **Warming**

The historic and bipartisan Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is a critical first step in reducing global warming. The new law will save 5.3 billion metric tons in energy-related CO2 emissions from 2008-2030. According to the Energy Information Administration, by 2030, the emissions saved every year are equivalent to that of 130 (500 megawatt) coal burning power plants. In our next step to combat global warming, the House passed a tax incentives bill to invest in renewable energy – the key to diversifying our energy sources with an emphasis on those that reduce emissions and bringing down energy costs over the long-term. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, the bill's solar investment tax credit alone will reduce carbon emissions by 240 million tons, or the equivalent of taking 52 million passenger cars off the road for one year.

### **Creating Green Jobs**

Not only is this investment in renewable energy good for the environment, but it will also create green jobs here at home. The Energy Independence and Security Act includes key provisions to create green jobs all across America, from rural towns to big cities. Job training programs in the bill will prepare workers for the up to 3 million new green jobs over the next 10 years. Twelve states stand to gain nearly 170,000 new manufacturing jobs in wind turbine manufacturing. Almost 93,000 new jobs will be created to manufacture the parts for solar power equipment ensuring the Silicon Valley remains a leader in new solar power technology. Moreover, new fuel economy standards for cars and trucks will help spur the creation of more than 170,800 new jobs in the year 2020. This legislation will help bring into the mainstream the kinds of technologies used by our very own Santa Clara University in its entry in the Department of Energy's Solar Decathlon. Santa Clara was one of just 20 international competitors chosen to participate in the competition. The team's use of innovative technologies earned a third place finish in the decathlon. You can read more about the event at:

<http://mikehonda.blogspot.com/2007/10/santa-clara-university-competes-in-us.html>

### **Leading the Way to Green Living**

An important part of the solution is educating people about the risks of global warming and what we can all do to reduce our impact. On this Earth Day, I would like to reinforce the message from the Green Living Forum I hosted last year that highlighted the ways that Silicon Valley is leading the fight against global warming and how we can each make educated decisions about the energy we use. The forum was held at the West Valley Branch Library in San Jose, which holds the distinction of being San Jose's first LEED Certified Green Building and is the first LEED Certified public library in the nation. You can view the presentations that the panelists made on my website at:

<http://mikehonda.blogspot.com/2007/09/silicon-valley-leading-way-to-green.html#presentations>

Earth Day is about promoting environmental citizenship and environmental awareness. That is

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what the Green Living Forum was all about, and that is what my Global Warming Education Act is all about. I believe that education is the key to demystifying climate change and helping empower people to take actions to make positive change in this area. You can read more about this bill at:

[http://honda.house.gov/issues/environment.shtml#global\\_warming](http://honda.house.gov/issues/environment.shtml#global_warming)